

Message Text

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64

ACTION EB-07

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CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 SP-02 STR-04 TRSE-00 CIEP-01

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRD, FR

SUBJECT: TEXTILES - FRENCH IMPORT LICENSING SCHEME:
BOTTLENECKS BUT NO REFUSALS

REF.: STATE 276951

SUMMARY. MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY ASSERTS THAT IMPORT LICENSES FOR TEXTILES ARE NOT REFUSED BUT THAT "BOTTLENECKS" CAUSE DELAYS IN ISSUANCE. SPRING MILLS SHIPMENTS HAVE BEEN CLEARED AND PROCEDURE HAS BEEN WORKED OUT WHICH SPEEDS UP LICENSE AUTHORIZATION FOR SPRING MILLS. LICENSING SYSTEM APPARENTLY HAS LITTLE IMPACT ON VOLUME OF FRENCH TEXTILE IMPORTS. END SUMMARY.

1. EMBASSY CONTACTED OFFICIALS IN OFFICE OF CHEMICAL, TEXTILE AND OTHER INDUSTRIES, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY, TO DISCUSS FRENCH IMPORT LICENSING SYSTEM. WE WERE INFORMED THAT GOF HAS NOT RPT NOT SUSPENDED ISSUANCE OF IMPORT LICENSES (VISA ADMINISTRATIF) FOR TEXTILES. MINISTRY OFFICIALS ASSERT THAT LICENSES ARE NEVER REFUSED, BUT IN CERTAIN CASES "BOTTLENECKS" OCCUR CAUSING DELAYS. SMALL QUANTITY,
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ONE-TIME-ONLY IMPORTS ARE AUTHORIZED WITHIN 2 OR 3

DAYS. HOWEVER, IMPORTS BY MAJOR IMPORTERS (DEFINED AS ONE WHO IMPORTS MORE THAN 20 TONS OF FABRIC PER YEAR) ARE CAREFULLY SCRUTINIZED TO ASSURE THAT COUNTRY OF ORIGIN IS CORRECTLY STATED ON BILL. VOLUME OF IMPORTS IN THIS CATEGORY, PAPERWORK INVOLVED AND RELATIVELY SMALL STAFF ARE CITED BY MINISTRY OFFICIALS AS FACTORS CAUSING "BOTTLENECKS" WITH RESULT THAT THESE LICENSES TAKE AT LEAST ONE MONTH TO BE PROCESSED.

2. REGARDING STATUS OF LICENSES FOR SPRING MILLS SHIPMENT NOTED REFTEL, EMBASSY SPOKE WITH SPRING MILLS PARIS REP. HE STATED THAT IMPORT LICENSES HAD BEEN OBTAINED FOR SHIPMENTS IN QUESTION. SINCE SPRING MILLS MANUFACTURES IN FRANCE (EMPLOYING APPROXIMATELY 100 WORKERS), LICENSING AUTHORITIES HAVE BEEN COOPERATIVE AND SYMPATHETIC REGARDING THEIR DIFFICULTIES. IN FACT, THEY SUGGESTED THAT SPRING MILLS SUBMIT PRO FORMA BILL AS SOON AS SHIPMENT LEAVES U.S. RATHER THAN WAITING UNTIL SHIPMENT ARRIVES IN FRANCE. ACCORDING TO SPRING MILLS REP, THIS SAVES SEVERAL WEEKS AND LICENSES ARE NOW RECEIVED ONE WEEK AFTER SHIPMENT ARRIVES IN FRANCE. THUS, ALTHOUGH LICENSING SYSTEM IS BURDENSOME FOR SPRING MILLS, IT IS NOT UNBEARABLE.

3. FIGURES SUPPLIED BY MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY INDICATE THAT U.S. EXPORTS ARE APPARENTLY UNAFFECTED BY LICENSING PROCEDURE: TOTAL IMPORTS OF COTTON FABRICS AMOUNTED TO 9,093 METRIC TONS IN 1974 COMPARED WITH 10,566 METRIC TONS IN THE FIRST 10 MONTHS OF 1975.

4. COMMENT. IT APPEARS THAT LICENSING SYSTEM HAS LITTLE OR NO EFFECT ON VOLUME OF FRENCH TEXTILE IMPORTS EXCEPT INsofar AS WOULD ARISE FROM END-USERS SHIFT OF SOURCING TO FRENCH SUPPLIERS IN ORDER TO AVOID POSSIBLE DISRUPTIONS IN PRODUCTION SCHEDULES. ONE OF MAIN CONCERNS OF TEXTILE INDUSTRY AND, THEREFORE, MINISTRY OFFICIALS, IS CIRCUMVENTION OF LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TEXTILE QUOTA LIMITS BY "LAUNDERING" OF FAR EAST TEXTILES IN OTHER EEC COUNTRIES. FOR EXAMPLE, SLIGHT VALUE ADDED IN BELGIUM TO FAR EAST TEXTILES RENDERS THEM OF BELGIAN ORIGIN AND THEY CAN BE IMPORTED INTO FRANCE WITHOUT BEING SUBJECT TO LICENSE REQUIREMENT. ACCORDING TO INDUSTRY SOURCES, THERE IS STRINGENT EXAMINATION AT FRENCH BORDER TO VERIFY THAT TEXTILE IMPORTS ARE INDEED BELGIAN OR ITALIAN AND

NOT OF FAR EAST ORIGIN.

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Approved on Date:
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Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
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